

Factsheet



Health

Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) close contact - what you need to know

Novel coronavirus (COVID-19) was first reported in Wuhan City in China in December 2019. Cases have now been confirmed in multiple countries around the world. While there is still much to be learned about infection with COVID-19, it appears that the illness is much less severe than SARS or MERS, and some people with the infection may have only a mild illness.

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Coronavirus

Coronaviruses are a type of virus that can affect humans and animals. Some coronaviruses cause illness similar to the common cold while other coronaviruses cause more serious illness, such as severe acute respiratory syndrome (SARS) and Middle East respiratory syndrome (MERS).

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Close contact

A close contact is someone who has been face to face for at least 15 minutes, or been in the same closed space for at least 2 hours, as someone who has tested positive for the COVID-19 when that person was infectious.

Isolate yourself at home and monitor your health closely

If you have been identified to have had close contact with someone who is confirmed to have infection with COVID-19 while they were infectious, you must:

- Isolate yourself at home until 14 days after you were last exposed to the infectious person. You should not leave the house, except for seeking medical care. You should stay in a different room to other people as much as possible, and wear a surgical mask when you are in the same room as another person and when seeking medical care. Use a separate bathroom if available. Do not go to work, school, or public areas, and do not use public transportation, taxi services or rideshares.

- watch for signs and symptoms:
 - fever
 - cough
 - shortness of breath
 - other early symptoms to watch for are chills, body aches, sore throat, headache and runny nose, muscle pain or diarrhoea

If you develop symptoms

- If you are seriously unwell and it is an emergency, call 000 immediately.
- Continue to keep yourself apart from other people as much as possible (eg in a different room).
- Wear a surgical mask if you have one.
- Call your local public health unit on 1300 066 055, they will assess you and advise on what to do next.
- If you can't contact the public health unit, see a doctor, preferably at a hospital emergency department, as soon as possible.
- Phone the emergency department before attending so they can make arrangements for when you arrive to prevent spread of infection to others.
- Do not travel on public transport, use taxis or ride-shares and do not attend any public places.

This page is also available in [Simplified Chinese](#) and [Traditional Chinese](#).

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